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RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO PRIORITY 0218
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RUDKSR/EUCOM PLANS AND ANALYSIS STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000007

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [KV](#) [YI](#) [AFDB](#)

SUBJECT: ALLIES STRESS CAUTION AND SOLIDARITY ON KFOR
DRAWDOWN

Classified By: Political Advisor Kelly Degnan. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)
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¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On January 6, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) agreed on the need to ensure KFOR maintains adequate troop levels and force mobility during the drawdown. The U.S. and a large number of Allies stressed that the KFOR move to deterrent presence must be a conditions-based process without timelines. The U.S., Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Greece, and Bulgaria called Allies to respect the "in-together, out-together" principle. Deputy Assistant Secretary General (DASG) for Operations Rossin said Serbian Ambassador Milinkovic had recently informed him that Belgrade intends to send a delegation to NATO in March with formal proposals for changing the Kumanovo Military Technical Agreement (MTA). DASG Rossin said KFOR had prepared for transferring responsibility for protecting the Gazimestan Monument to the Kosovo Police, a move that was currently being considered by the Military Committee for endorsement to the NAC. At the close of the meeting, Allies agreed to hold the Defense Ministerial Afghanistan meeting in ISAF format and are debating the pros and cons of holding a KFOR format meeting. END SUMMARY

NATO Engagement in Kosovo Critical

¶2. (C) Deputy Secretary General (DSYG) Bisogniero said continued NATO engagement in Kosovo was critical because although Kosovo was stable, tensions persist, especially in the north. The German PermRep cautioned that we remained on thin ice in Kosovo and needed to ensure we maintained adequate troop levels and force mobility. The Greek PermRep said the situation was better but not ideal, and warned of the need to closely monitor political developments.

¶3. (C) DASG Rossin assessed that post-election political turmoil was normal for Kosovo's level of development and did not threaten a safe and secure environment. The Bulgarian PermRep said the elections were a positive sign but the lack of Kosovo Serb participation in the north was troubling. Slovenia added that steps were needed to ensure better integration of Kosovo Serbs in the north. Italy and Slovenia warned that the ongoing case challenging Kosovo's

independence in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) could have a negative effect on stability, and Romania said NATO would need to fine-tune its approach after the ICJ decision.

KFOR Drawdown Must Be Conditions-Based

14. (C) The U.S. stressed that the KFOR move to deterrent presence must be a conditions-based process without timelines. The majority of Allies explicitly echoed this theme. NATO International Military Staff Assistant Director for Operations, Major General Li Gobbi, said NATO Military Authorities (NMAs) understood that the KFOR drawdown was an events-driven, not time-driven process, and were conducting planning accordingly.

15. (C) MG Li Gobbi said the first phase of the KFOR drawdown was on schedule for completion by January 31, at which time KFOR will have 10,200 troops (Gate 1). MG Li Gobbi said shortfalls, especially in intelligence, rotary wing, and maneuver forces, remained that would be a concern for moving to Gate 2 (5,500 troops). He noted, however, that KFOR would be able to stand up the joint logistics unit by the end of the month.

16. (C) Germany, supported by Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, said the move to Gate 2 must remain strictly conditions-based and would require precise analysis. Italy concurred, but

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expressed optimism that the appropriate conditions could be met in the short-term. Romania emphasized that political criteria must be considered in addition to security conditions, and Bulgaria added that regional factors were also important.

In-Together, Out-Together

17. (C) The U.S., Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Greece, and Bulgaria stressed that the KFOR drawdown must proceed in accordance with the principle of "in-together, out-together." MG Li Gobbi said setting unilateral national deadlines for withdrawing from KFOR threatened the conditions-based approach. To ensure adequate inclusion of non-NATO troop contributors, Italy and the Czech Republic called for their inclusion at the Kosovo discussion by Defense Ministers in February. Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia stressed their intentions to maintain their contributions.

Belgrade to Present MTA Proposals in March

18. (C) The Czech PermRep said NATO should be open to revising the Kumanovo Military Technical Agreement (MTA) and should encourage Belgrade to convey its ideas to NATO. The UK advised caution on the MTA. USNATO reported that the U.S. had urged Serbia to come forward with specific proposals during bilateral contacts, noting the ball was in Belgrade's court. DASG Rossin said Serbian Ambassador Milinkovic had recently informed him that Belgrade intends to send a delegation to NATO in March with formal proposals for adjusting the agreement.

Patrimonial Sites Must Be Treated Carefully

19. (C) MG Li Gobbi said the KFOR Commander (COMKFOR) was sensitive to the risks of turning over the nine KFOR-protected patrimonial sites to the Kosovo Police (KP) and was developing comprehensive plans for unfixing these

sites in consultation with relevant actors. He reported that the first request to unfix a site, Gazimestan Monument, was with the Military Committee and said the KP had shown their readiness to assume responsibility during joint exercises. DASG Rossin endorsed COMKFOR's approach and said KFOR had well and thoroughly prepared for unfixing Gazimestan.

¶10. (C) Italy, supported by Hungary, stressed that KFOR must maintain the capability to protect the nine sites even after unfixing. The Czech PermRep said he hoped the careful approach to Gazimestan would be a model for all the sites, and Greece said this task must be handled with extreme sensitivity. Croatia said coordination was needed with Belgrade, and DASG Rossin noted that Serbian Ambassador Milinkovic had told him recently that Belgrade's major concern was with the protected sites of Decani and Pec rather than Gazimestan.

Allies Want More Attention to Kosovo

¶11. (C) Albania said the Council should be reviewing the situation in Kosovo more intensively. Albania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Spain, and Turkey called for more frequent Kosovo discussions in the NAC. Albania, supported by Bulgaria, Czech Republic, and Slovakia, said the NAC should visit Kosovo soon. Spain said it could support a visit to KFOR rather than Kosovo. The UK added that it would welcome a briefing in the NAC by Joint Forces Command Naples Commander Admiral Fitzgerald.

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¶12. (C) Albania, supported by France, UK, Croatia, Romania, and Slovenia, called for a NAC discussion with EU Law and Justice Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) chief de Kermabon. Slovenia asked that EU Special Representative Feith also be invited. The Turkish Deputy PermRep said he would pass on this suggestion to Ankara for guidance. Spain offered to facilitate a discussion as current holder of the EU Presidency.

KSF Shortfalls Remain

¶13. (C) MG Li Gobbi said two recruitment campaigns in 2010 and two in 2011 are planned to fill out the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) structure, with a particular emphasis on attracting Kosovo Serbs. He said it would be critical to resolve the 9 million euro shortfall in the KSF trust fund. Slovenia said it had just contributed 1.8 million euros in equipment, and Albania said it would soon contribute 500,000 dollars.

¶14. (C) DASG Rossin said manning shortfalls in the Military Civil Advisory Division for training the KSF and the NATO Advisory Team (NAT) for the Ministry of the KSF would stall achievement of full operating capability if not addressed. Slovenia noted that it had just sent one volunteer to serve in the NAT and would contribute two more.

AOB: Defense Ministerial Meeting in ISAF Format

¶15. (C) Under Any Other Business, the DSYG sought Council approval to include non-NATO ISAF contributors in the Afghanistan session at the February Defense Ministerial. The Turkish Deputy PermRep said he foresaw no problem but needed to seek Ankara's approval. All other Allies approved the proposal.
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